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The Alternatives Program



A Women's Day Treatment Program

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San Mateo County Probation Department

Sponsored by the Criminal Justice Council of San Mateo
Funded by the Peninsula Community Foundation and San Mateo County Probation Department

The Alternatives Program
680 Warren Street, Redwood City, CA 94063, (415) 363-4244

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The Alternatives Program

Mission Statement:

To manage a drug and alcohol free community based day treatment environment for women as an alternative to incarceration in the San Mateo County Jail. To provide women with basic life skills in an effort to decrease or terminate their criminal conduct while producing a positive impact on their families and future generations.

The Alternatives Program

Location:

The Alternatives Program is located at 680 Warren Street in Redwood City, CA, on the corner of Brewster Avenue and Warren Street, approx. 3 blocks from the Hall of Justice.

Map: Directions from Highway 101



Directions from Interstate 280:

Exit on Farmhill Road; name of road will eventually change to Jefferson Avenue. Follow Jefferson Avenue to El Camino Real and make a left turn at the stop light. Continue on El Camino Real to Brewster Avenue and make a right turn. Go approximately two blocks and make a right turn on Warren Street. Park on the street or turn left into facility parking lot.

The Alternatives Program

Introduction

The Alternatives Program is a project of the Criminal Justice Council of San Mateo County and the San Mateo County Probation Department. It is administered by the San Mateo County Probation Department, Adult Division. The funding for the two (2) year program is provided by the Peninsula Community Foundation with some additional funding by the San Mateo County Probation Department.

Program Objectives

1. To provide the Superior and Municipal judges with a comprehensive day treatment program as a cost beneficial alternative to incarceration of women offenders;
2. To target women in the criminal justice system with children and offer appropriate individualized services to positively impact them, their families, and future generations;
3. To provide intensive supervision (electronic monitoring when appropriate) of high risk/high need women offenders in the community;
4. To decrease or terminate the frequency and/or severity of the program participants' criminal conduct;
5. To carry out the directives of the Municipal and/or Superior Courts.

Target Population

The target population will be high risk/high needs misdemeanor and felony women offenders who are convicted by the Courts.

Participant Profile

1. Supervised probation of two (2) to five (5) years;
2. Imposition of 90 days or more County Jail, stayed on condition the defendant enter and complete the Alternatives Program;
3. San Mateo County resident;
4. Stable residence;
5. Must have an operative telephone for evening and week-end monitoring;
6. Preference given to women with children;
7. Non-violent present offense and history;
8. Personal commitment of six (6) months to one (1) year in the program and four (4) to six (6) months After care;
9. Physically/legally able to work;
10. No mental/emotional illness to prevent success in program;
11. Transportation must be provided by participant.

Admission

Admission will be through adjudication by the Municipal or Superior Courts upon a recommendation by the Alternatives Program intake probation officer.

If the court feels at the time of the plea the defendant would be an appropriate candidate for the Alternatives Program, a referral should be made to the Probation Department for an Alternatives Program evaluation. Upon receipt of such referral, the Alternatives Program or Superior Court officer will conduct a full pre-sentence investigation.

The Alternatives Program screening procedure will include:

- application process
- tour of the facility
- introduction to the Alternatives Program staff when possible
- review of the Alternatives Program Rules
- review of the Alternatives Program Facility Rules
- explanation of the daily operations of the program
- Program expectations and disciplinary actions

If appropriate for Alternatives Program participation, the recommendation will be for admission with appropriate conditions, including whether or not electronic monitoring is needed; date of admission will also be included. Please see attached sample report for Municipal Court only (Form #1); Superior Court pre-sentence report will remain unchanged except the defendant will also be screened by an Alternatives Program Intake officer. The screening information will be included in the Superior Court pre-sentence report.

Orientation/Assessment

All participants upon being ordered into the Alternatives Program will be directed by the Court to immediately report to the Program office. Previously screened applicants will already have a map as well as directives to report to the Alternatives Program office upon sentencing. The directive to report immediately is particularly important if the defendant is not in custody and electronic monitoring is ordered as a condition of participation.

The participant, upon reporting, will be oriented to the general terms of intensive probation supervision. Program expectations will again be reviewed and the participant will be given a date to report for the Orientation/Assessment interview. In the time between sentencing and the start of program participation, participants will function under intensive supervision standards which include a minimum of two times a week personal contact and random chemical testing.

Orientation/Assessment will normally take place within two (2) weeks after sentencing. On the scheduled appointment date, the participant will report to the Alternatives Program. Orientation will be conducted in a group setting.

After orientation, participants will be assigned to and assessed by an Alternatives Program probation officer. The assessment will include an interview to determine the participants specific needs. A Case Plan, which will serve as a contract, will subsequently be developed from this interview. The Case Plan will be signed before the participant actually starts the program. Inclusive in the assessment process is:

- a review of the Alternatives Program Probation Application,
- a review and signing of the Alternatives Program Rules,
- a review and signing of the Alternatives Program Facility Rules,
- an orientation to probation (in Superior Court cases, OADTP will be signed).

Program Participation

Hours

The Alternatives Program is in lieu of incarceration and, therefore, the participants must be available to the Alternatives Program staff on a 24-hour basis, seven (7) days per week. The Alternatives Program hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Each participant must report to the program location in person on a daily basis at 9:00 a.m. and participate in her Case Plan as determined in the assessment process.

Each participant is expected to be available at all times when they are not participating at the Alternatives Program for random checks by the Alternatives Program staff and, in addition, if on electronic monitoring by the electronic monitoring staff. The checks may be by telephone, in person, electronic monitoring or by reporting to a check in center (i.e., First Chance). Each participant must submit to random urinalysis and saliva (alcohol) testing as required by the Alternatives Program staff.

Monitoring

The Alternatives Program staff will monitor each participant's contract performance during their participation in the program. The probation officer will have daily contact with their probationers/participants. There will be regular after hour and weekend checks. There will be a weekly staffing of all cases to review the Case Plan and the participants' progress. There will be written progress reports every four (4) months.

Services From Community and County Agencies

There will be some mandatory and some elective services for all participants. The program will make use of several private pro bono services, education and employment opportunities in the community, and services from community and other county agencies.

The Alternatives Program will continue to develop needed services as the exact population of the program solidifies. The core treatment modality for the program will be cognitive skills training, drug and alcohol treatment, and literacy evaluation training. At present, the Alternatives Program will administer a number of services to include but not limited to the following:

Cognitive Skills Training (70 classroom hours)

- Self control
- Abstract vs. Concrete Thinking
- Interpersonal Problem Solving
- Social Perspective
- Values
- Critical Reasoning

Substance Abuse Treatment

- Acupuncture
- Biochemical restoration

- Counseling
- Education
- Urinalysis
- Saliva testing

Literacy Skills Training

- Project Read to provide on-site assessment
- Individual tutoring

Continuing Education

- Adult education
- GED (on site if minimum 8 participants)
- College women's re-entry programs

Vocational Referrals, i.e. ROP, OICW, etc.

- Enrollment assistance

Self-Esteem Building Classes/Workshops

Communication Skills Development/Job Skills Training

- Personal grooming and make-up classes
- Job interview techniques
- Job application sources/completion
- Color, style and personal presentation techniques

Job Search/Placement Assistance

Financial Management Seminars

- Budgets
- Checkbook balancing
- Consumer Beware Seminars

Family Planning Services

- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Sexual harassment
- Birth Control

Parenting and Child Rearing Skills

Child Care Referrals

Domestic Violence Seminars

Personal Issue Support Groups

Electronic Home Detention Program

Women's Health Issues

After Care

Treatment Theory

The core treatment modality of the Alternatives Program is Cognitive Skills Training. This treatment program was originated at the University of Victoria in Canada by researchers working with prison inmates through an educational system. They discovered a 60% decrease in recidivism rate for those who participated in the cognitive skills program. The program is extensively used in the Canadian criminal justice system and is finding widespread acceptance in the United States. There is a substantial body of research indicating that offenders have deficits in cognitive skills which are required for adequate social adjustments and that training in these skills is an essential component of effective correctional programs. (Time To Think: A Cognitive Model of Offender Rehabilitation and Delinquency Prevention (Ross and Fabiano, 1985))

The classroom implementation of the program will be delivered by line staff, but the actual skills learned will be incorporated and reinforced in all aspects of staff/client interaction. The underlying premise of the program is that anti-social people think differently than pro-social people. The program's focus is to shift the thinking pattern of the participants to a pro-social pattern.

We are undertaking an ambitious task. The program will attempt to train women offenders to learn the cognitive skills they need to make an adequate social adjustment. Although it is educational in nature, the focus is on skill-based exercises rather than traditional content specific classroom teaching. The goal is to train the women to apply their new skills to their own life experiences. The training will focus on modifying and reducing the impulsive, egocentric, illogical and rigid thinking patterns which are characteristic of this group. We hope to teach the women how to challenge their own faulty thinking patterns.

Staff

Staff of the Alternatives Program will consist of the following Adult Probation staff:

Program Staff

- 1 Supervising Probation Officer
- 2 Deputy Probation Officers
- 1 Clerical

In-Kind Services

- 1 Deputy Chief Probation Officer (5%)
- 1 Director (20%)
- 1 Secretary (20%)

Additional Clerical Support Services

In addition there are a number of pro bono services from private providers as well as community and county agencies. The budget allows for privately paid services, including some training needs.

Measurements:

- Pre-program, mid-program and post-program tests will be administered to participants by an outside neutral agent. The tests will measure the participants incorporation of the Cognitive Skills training (attitude changes) during the period of program participation.
- The test will be treated with the utmost confidentiality to ensure viable feedback. The individual test scores and answers will not be available to the Alternatives Program staff.
- The test results will be analyzed, tabulated and stored by the neutral agent. The general results of the tests will be available as a measuring tool to determine the effectiveness of the Cognitive Skills training.
- There will be outcome measures done by the staff at termination from the Alternatives Program.

MANDATORY CONTACT STANDARDS

The Alternatives Program has been designed into a three (3) phase structure. Some phases contain varying levels to measure the participant's performance.

PHASE I: IN HOUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM:

LEVEL A :

1. House arrest or electronic monitoring .
2. Regular program attendance.
3. Program participation.
4. Positive attitude and adjustment to probation/program.
5. Adherence to program rules.
6. Adherence to facility rules.

LEVEL B:

1. Completion of the Cognitive Skills training.
2. Stabilization of housing.
3. Stabilization of child care.
4. Decrease in house arrest or electronic monitoring.
5. Continued adherence to the expectations of Level A.

There is a general expectation that the women will complete the first phase of the program within six (6) months of entry with approximately three (3) months in each level.

PHASE II : IN HOUSE AND COMMUNITY TREATMENT PROGRAM:

LEVEL A:

- a. Completion of Phase I

- b. In house training in the morning.
- c. Limited or no house arrest or electronic monitoring
- d. Employment, educational or vocational training/search in the afternoon which will require the client to remain at the Alternatives Program in a structured environment until her plan is approved and verified by the supervising AP Probation Officer.
- e. Completion of her in-house treatment program according to her Case Plan.

LEVEL B:

- a. Completion of all of the above.
- b. Continued daily, partial in-house program participation until the client obtains FULL TIME employment, educational or vocational training so the bulk of her day is occupied.
- c. Participation in special interest groups which will include in-house AA and or NA meetings.
- d. Participation in community structured support services, i.e. individual counseling.
- e. Contact with AP Probation Officer a minimum of two times per week .

LEVEL C:

- a. Graduation from Alternatives.
- b. In-house graduation ceremony with family and friends participating.
- c. Return to sentencing Court to be presented the Alternatives Program Certificate of Completion by the sentencing Judge.
- d. Deletion by the sentencing Court of any county jail sentence previously stayed.

Phase II should take approximately six (6) months with about two (2) months on each level.

PHASE III: AFTER CARE

1. Client will remain under intensive supervision by the AP Probation Officer.
2. She will be expected to participate in the Alternatives Program's AA, NA or other needed treatment as determined in her Case Plan.

This stage is expected to take from four (4) to six (6) months at which time there will be an Administrative staffing to determine if the case should be transferred to a regular Probation Department supervision caseload .

The Alternatives Program will remain open to all graduates as a support system. There will be occasions when they will be asked to volunteer time which may involve just relating their Alternatives experience with current participants. There is also a nation-wide literacy program for women, that involves women helping each other, for which our graduates will be encouraged to volunteer. There will be no mandate for the graduates upon completion of After Care to maintain contact with the program, but they will be encouraged to do so.

Discipline

Program Violations will include:

- inappropriate behavior in the program (fighting, lying, etc.)
- failure to report in as scheduled
- failure to follow daily itinerary
- failure to notify staff of changes in situation (residence, etc.)
- failure to comply with program rules and regulations or conditions of the contract
- failure to comply with the general conditions of probation
- failure to submit to alcohol/drug testing
- arrest and/or conviction of new criminal offense
- continued alcohol/drug use

When there is determination of a possible violation, the case will be staffed by the entire Alternatives Program team (Administrative Review). If it is determined that a violation has occurred, the team will review the situation and determine what sanctions will be imposed. Any and all of the Adult Probation Division's sanctions and alternatives may be imposed up to and including termination from the program and a return to court on a probation violation.

In some cases the participant might be returned to court for violation of probation, and if the Alternatives Program team feels it is appropriate, a recommendation will be made to return the participant to the program.

All discipline problems will be documented in the participant's case file and be included in the 4-month progress or termination report.

Unsuccessful Termination

In the case of a major infraction (violation), the participant will be returned to the referring court. The Alternatives Program recommendation will be based on an administrative staffing. The normal recommendation will be to revoke the Alternatives Program and probation and impose the stayed jail time, with or without continued probation. In some cases, the recommendation may include additional county jail time or state prison time (felonies only).

Successful Termination

Upon successful completion of the program, a Program Completion Report will be forwarded to the referring court with a recommendation to delete the stayed county jail time. The participant will appear in court to be presented with a Completion Certificate.

ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

PROGRAM RULES

I understand that the Alternatives Program is an extension of my stayed San Mateo County jail incarceration time and all rules and regulations of said institution are in effect throughout my participation in the program, unless I am specifically given written permission otherwise by the Alternatives Program Probation Officer.

I understand and agree to abide by the following rules and regulations as established by the Alternatives Program:

1. I shall refrain from any violation of any law (federal, state, county and city). I shall immediately contact my Alternatives Program probation officer if arrested or questioned by any law enforcement officer.
2. I will not purchase, own, possess, use, or have under my control a deadly weapon or firearm. I understand I will be subject to periodic searches to determine compliance/non-compliance with this condition of the Alternatives Program.
3. I shall secure written permission from the Alternatives Program staff before leaving the County and State of California.
4. I shall notify my Alternatives Program probation officer immediately of any change in my place of residence. Failure to be at said residence during any designated time may be considered a major violation.
5. I must report at such time and place as directed by my Alternatives Program probation officer.
6. I shall not use any drugs, including narcotics and alcohol, which have not been prescribed by a physician, and will willingly submit to chemical testing. I understand a failure to test will be considered a positive reading (dirty test).
7. I shall immediately notify my probation officer of any and all prescription drugs prior to filling or using such prescription drugs unless an emergency exists as later determined by my probation officer.
8. I will comply with the required daily itinerary (Case Plan) as approved by the Alternatives Program staff.
9. I will notify my Alternatives Program probation officer as soon as I am aware of any potential major change in my situation such as child care needs, vocational/educational program, etc.
10. I shall not enter into any agreement to act as an informer or special agent with a law enforcement agency without written permission of the Court.
11. I shall make all efforts to accomplish all Case Plan/contract objectives which will be established by Alternatives Program staff.

I understand that the Alternatives Program can change my specific conditions of probation, reduce or extend my probationary time, and terminate me from the Alternatives Program for violation of any of the above conditions, and may issue a warrant which may result in the imposition of my original suspended sentence.

Probationer

Date

Probation Officer

Date

Name: _____

ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

FACILITY RULES

1. Participants must report at 9:00 a.m. Monday through Friday to the Alternatives Program facility unless otherwise specified by their probation officer.
2. Repeated late arrivals will be subjected to disciplinary action (minor violation).
3. You must show proof of a valid California Driver's License and insurance in order to operate a motor vehicle.
4. If a participant must miss a session, it is their responsibility to call no later than 9:00 a.m. and make all efforts to talk to their probation officer. A doctor's excuse may be required within 24 hours of return to the program.
5. All participants must be at the facility at the designated time and sign the attendance sheet at the Reception Desk to be credited for participation.
6. All participants of the Alternatives Program have a 5:00 p.m. curfew. Your curfew may be extended at the discretion of your probation officer.
7. No drugs or alcohol will be allowed on the premises.
8. No participant shall report to the facility under the influence of any drug, including alcohol, unless prescribed by a physician. Random chemical tests will be conducted during the program.
9. You will be subject to search and seizure to enforce rules 7 & 8.
10. No violence of any kind will be tolerated. No property destruction allowed.
11. Everyone is required to participate in and complete their designed Case Plan.
12. This is a non-smoking building.
13. Respect must be shown to others at all times while on the premises.
14. Profanity will not be allowed.
15. Permission must be obtained prior to the participant leaving a classroom or program for any reason.
16. Participants cannot leave the premises for any reason without prior approval. Approval granted only for emergency reasons as determined by the Alternatives Program staff.

I understand that during my participation in the Alternatives Program, the above rules are considered special conditions of my probation. My failure to comply with these conditions will be considered violation of probation. I have read and agree to follow the above rules.

Probationer

Date

Probation Officer

Date

IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

The People of the State of California,)

Plaintiff,)

vs

Defendant.)

Court Number *

* Branch

*

PROBATION OFFICER'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION
TO THE ABOVE-ENTITLED HONORABLE COURT

OFFENSE: *
DATE: *
ARRESTED: *
CUSTODY: *
GUILTY BY: *

Sentencing Date & Time

RECOMMENDATION:

☐

Defendant is a suitable candidate for the Alternatives Program under the following terms and conditions:

or

☐

Defendant is not a suitable candidate for the Alternatives Program , based on the following:

- ☐ Not a San Mateo County resident (defendant resides in _____).
- ☐ Defendant is a transient or has an unstable housing situation
- ☐ Defendant refused to agree to needed electronic monitoring
- ☐ Defendant refuses to commit to minimum 6 mo. to 1 year program requirement
- ☐ Defendant has no telephone
- ☐ Defendant has a history of violence
- ☐ Defendant lacks motivation
- ☐ Defendant lacks appropriate transportation to participation in program
- ☐ Other: _____

Electronic Monitoring: _____

Comments: _____

Respectfully submitted,

GENE A. ROH
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER

By * _____
Deputy Probation Officer

Approved,

By * _____
Supervising Probation Officer

NOTE: If recommendation is for or against the Alternatives Program, the alternate box will be deleted when dictated or filled in for typing. **Electronic Monitoring** will always be included if the recommendation is for the Alternatives Program. **Comments** will be included in every report.